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Mr. Coudert does hardly more than restate problems, but he who makes vital problems appear, as they so often are, matters for gradual adjustment and adaptation rather than for cocksure remedies, performs a real service.

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THE COUNTRY CHURCH. By CHARLES OTIS GILL, AND GIFFORD PINCHOT. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1913.

Apart from statistical matter, which deserves careful study upon the part of those specially concerned in the problem of the country church, this little book may be read through in half an hour, and it is well worth reading by any one who feels the least interest in the general welfare. That the church as a whole, and the country church in particular, is losing something of its former influence is no doubt generally suspected, but few, perhaps, appreciate the importance of the church in country life or the significance of its apparent decline. In his introduction to the volume under consideration, Gifford Pinchot describes the plight of a country community which had been without a church for more than twenty years. The moral and social laxity of this community was flagrant. "Disbelief in the existence of goodness appeared to be common, public disapproval of indecency was timid or lacking, and religion was in general disrepute. Not only was there no day of worship, but also no day of rest. Life was mean, hard, small, selfish, and covetous. Land belonging to the town was openly pillaged by the public officers who held it in trust; real-estate values were low; and among the respectable families there was a general desire to sell their property and move away. When a church was organized, "the change which followed was swift, striking, thorough, and enduring." Comparison of this churchless community with those which keep up a considerable, though lessening, interest in religious matters, points an obvious moral.

*The Country Church* is published under the authority of the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and the investigation whose results it embodies grew out of the work of the Commission on Country Life. The method of the investigators was thorough, and, so far as it could be tested, proved exact. The inquiry was limited to two counties—Windsor County, Vermont, and Tompkins County, New York. Within these counties information was gathered upon a large number of specific points, showing the altered conditions that have come to pass in a period of twenty years. Of the questions studied one of the most difficult, as well as important, was that of attendance; for it was found necessary to draw the line sharply between church attendance and church membership. In an effort to answer the question as to the relative increase or decrease of church attendance, recourse was had to the tax list of the county, and, by this and other means, fairly complete lists were obtained of the families living in the county at the beginning and at the end of the chosen period. Carefully selected persons from each church then went over the lists, recording the church-going habits of each member of every family, and the estimates formed in this way tallied almost exactly with the records of counted congregations, of which not a few came to light during the progress of the investigation: in Windsor County such records were found for thirty-five churches.

The results of this painstaking inquiry show badly as to nearly every point of importance. Church membership in Windsor County increased in the twenty years four per cent., and in Tompkins County two per cent.; but during the same period church attendance fell off nearly thirty-one per cent. in Windsor County and thirty-three per cent. in Tompkins County. The expenditures, expressed in dollars, of the churches in Windsor County increased twenty-three per cent., and in Tompkins County seven per cent.; but measured in purchasing power, or in ability to produce results, the expenditures of the churches in the two counties showed a decrease of two and seven per cent., respectively. Moreover, in these two counties the salaries of ministers, which have increased somewhat in nominal amount, nevertheless when reckoned by purchasing power showed a decline of seven per cent. in one county and of sixteen per cent. in the other. The information collected as to the educational equipment of country ministers is likewise far from reassuring. It appears that in the two counties only twelve ministers had completed the regular college and seminary course of seven years. "Thirty-four had received either college or seminary training or both together of from three to six years. Ten had taken the course in reading and study prescribed by Methodist Episcopal Conferences; while forty-seven (or more than half) had received no training which could be regarded as adequate for a minister of the present day." These and a mass of similar facts prove beyond reasonable doubt that the country church is fast losing effectiveness.

What is the remedy for this deplorable state of affairs? The authors point out that no one solution of the problem is possible. The condition of the country church stands in vital relation to the condition of country life in general. But if the church cannot thrive where conditions are bad or backward, it is equally true that in the coming reconstruction of country life the church must play the most important part. Improvement and decentralization of schools is strongly advised. Disuse of antiquated methods on the part of the churches and the substitution of a programme of social service, is a clearly indicated necessity. A more effective ministry is urgently needed; and here truly is an opportunity for labor of a genuinely consecrated sort. Finally the evils of "over-churching" must be overcome through friendly co-operation along practical lines.

The country church is one of the most essential agencies of civilization; it is plain that its power for good has weakened alarmingly; remedies none too easily applicable, but in part proved effective, are available—such is the message of this clear, trustworthy, and significant book.

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EUROPEAN CITIES AT WORK. By FREDERIC C. HOWE, PH.D. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1913.

Without delving very deeply for causes, or analyzing methods in great detail, Dr. Howe gives us rapid and interesting sketches of the municipal activities of many German and some British cities, and of the results achieved by them. This makes fascinating reading. Pleasanter than romance is the series of pictures which the book calls up before our minds—pictures of well-planned cities, of beautiful streets, magnifi-